

THE SPACES BETWEEN: SPATIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF A PROPOSED IRON AGE IIB DOMESTIC HOUSE AT TEL HALIF, ISRAEL

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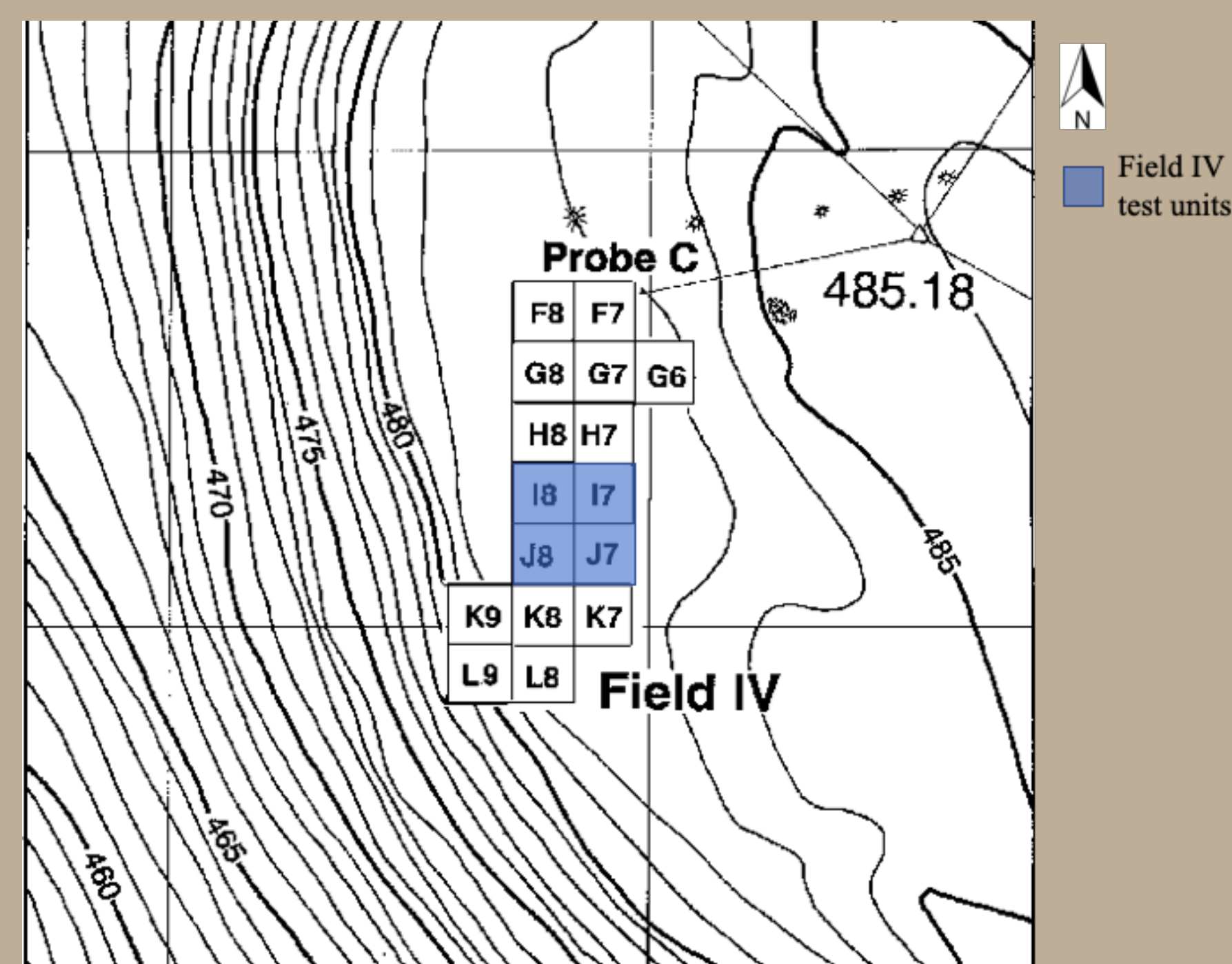
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INTRODUCTION

Tel Halif, or Lahav, is a tell site in the Northern Negev. Excavations at Tel Halif uncovered the highest concentration of Iron IIB households in Field IV, near the edge of the tell, likely representing an Iron II (930-700 BCE) urban neighborhood on the outskirts of the city. A multitude of houses have been described in field IV (Hardin 2010), including in Areas F7 to the North and K8 to the South (Hardin 2004; Oksuz 2017).



The areas between these two houses (I7, I8, J7, and J8) contained an Iron II destruction layer so severe that the LRP abandoned attempts to interpret their contents. This poster argues for the existence of a similar domestic space in these previously overlooked areas.

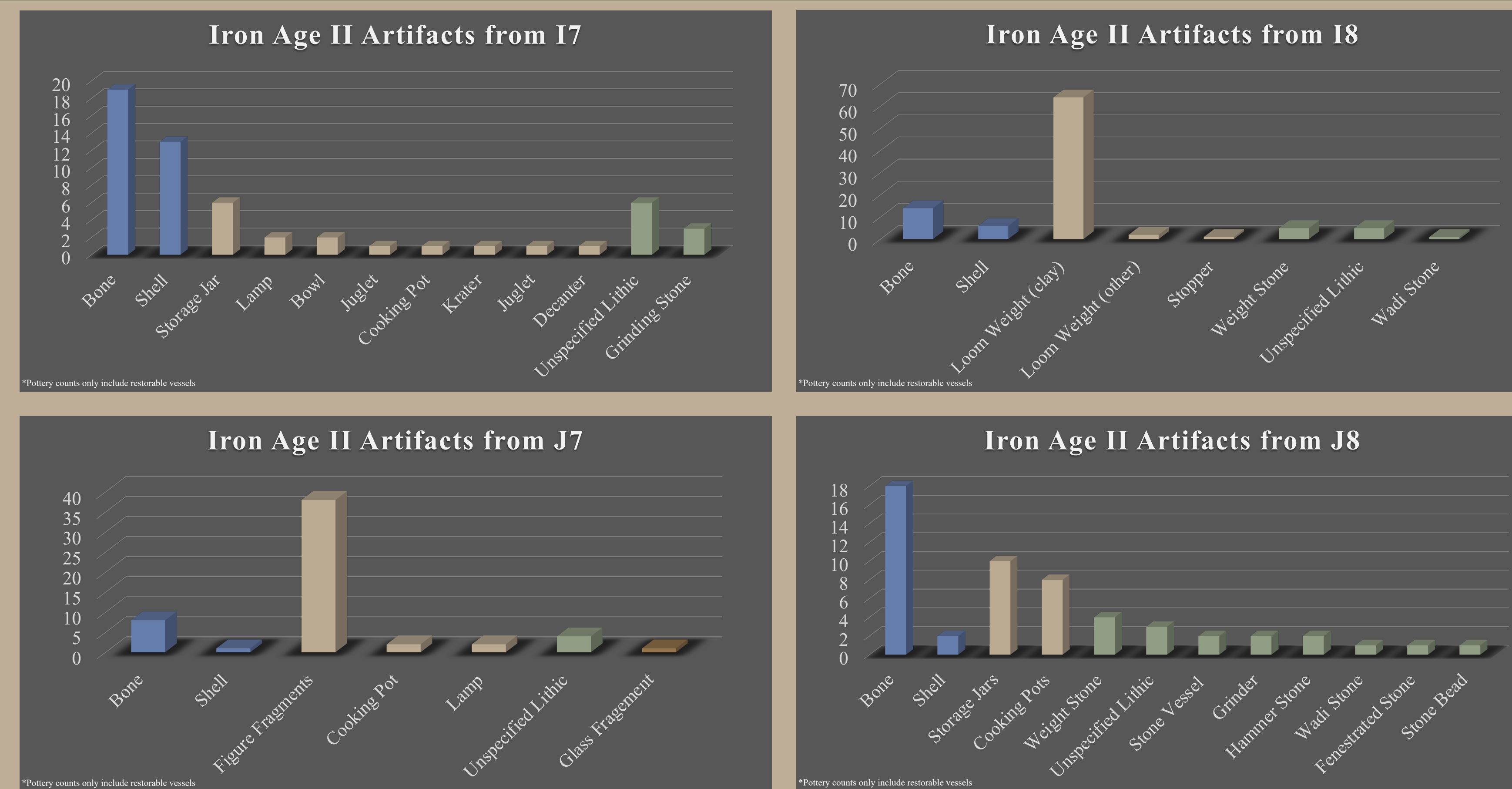
METHODS

Tel Halif was excavated using Wheeler-Kenyon grid excavation techniques in conjunction with "magic squares" (Oksuz 2017). The magic square technique utilizes a PVC grid of 50cm x 50cm squares which is laid within the larger 5m x 5m square, allowing for exact and systematic excavation of artifact dense areas (Hardin 2010). Together, these techniques preserved the three-dimensional relationships of artifacts and installations.



The authors used spatial analysis following the "magic square" measurements in conjuncture with the original excavation notes from areas I7, I8, J7, and J8 to determine artifacts that maintained spatial integrity. Much of the information was available via DigMaster. Original field notes and reports housed at the Cobb Institute of Archaeology were also consulted. Artifacts in situ from each excavation square were compiled and compared to the recovered artifacts from the domestic houses in F7 and K8.

RESULTS



DISCUSSION

While the architectural features in I7, I8, J7, and J8 were likely damaged in association with the Assyrian military campaign in 705 BCE, results from the recovered artifacts support the likelihood of an additional Iron Age domestic structure.

Analyses suggest material culture from these spaces were domestic in nature and aligned with the recovered artifacts from F7 and K8.

I7
The pillar uncovered in this area suggests use as an occupational space, consistent with Iron II structures. Reconstructed pottery and faunal remains suggest a domestic space.

J7
Use as an indoor space is evidenced by the presence of floors. Iron II and Persian artifacts were recovered from this area, including figurine fragments.

I8
Walls and surfaces support the possibility of an occupational space. A large number (n=66) of loom weights recovered from this area bolster the suggestion of domestic usage.

J8
A pillar base, likely associated with the pillar in Area I7, is consistent with Iron II household architecture. Faunal remains and pottery suggest domestic use.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this investigation was to discern any structures and/or objects in four previously overlooked areas of Field IV at Tel Halif. Evidence uncovered from Areas I7, I8, J7, and J8 demonstrates the possibility of a domestic Iron IIB (700-650 BCE) space between two identified Iron IIB households. Recovered artifacts from Area I7 yielded substantial proof of habitation. The pottery, particularly the cooking pot, bowl, and storage jars, as well as faunal remains indicate domestic activity – most likely food preparation. Our findings from Areas I7, I8, J7, and J8 at Tel Halif highlight the potential wealth of information in spaces which may be tempting to write off due to collapsed structures or other destruction.



The size of homes gives evidence of increasing population at Tel Halif; the placement of homes gives evidence of contextual city planning at a time of increased military activity; artifacts such as loom weights within the home give evidence of cottage industries whose products might enter the growing trade networks throughout Syria and Palestine in the late Iron IIB. Households, both well-preserved like the F7 and K8 structures and with damaged architectural features like those uncovered in I7, I8, J7, and J8, provide valuable evidence about their own and larger contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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